

Whitehall Middle School



Student Handbook

2025-2026

Principal: Craig Thompson
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Whitehall, Michigan 49461
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STUDENT HANDBOOK

<u>SCHOOL COLORS</u> Red, White & Black	<u>SCHOOL SONG</u> Cheer Cheer for old Whitehall High And let the echoes resound our cry Send our volley cheer on high Shake down the thunder from the sky What tho the odds be great or small Old Whitehall High will win overall While our loyal team goes marching onward to victory!
<u>MASCOT</u> Viking	

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As included in the policies of the Whitehall Board of Education, students should recognize the following:

"Students have rights which should be recognized and respected under the federal and state constitutions. Every right carries with it certain responsibilities, which students should be expected to assume.

Among these rights and responsibilities are:

1. The right to an education and the responsibility to put forth their best efforts during the educational process.
2. The right to expect school personnel to be qualified in providing an education and the responsibility to respect the rights of other students and all persons involved in the educational process.
3. The right to equal education opportunity and freedom from discrimination and the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
4. The right to attend free public schools and the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
5. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions affecting the student's rights.
6. The right of privacy, which includes the privacy of school records.

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Academic Information

Student Scheduling and Assignment

Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. Schedules are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled through the counseling office by parents or guardians. Students may be denied course enrollment (or schedule change) due to a lack of available space in the requested class and/or other scheduling conflicts.

Report Cards

Each semester (2 times per year) students receive a report card in all core and elective classes. Grades can be monitored throughout the semester via PowerSchool.

Student Records

Parents and students are encouraged to be aware of the contents of student records. Information is kept to aid the understanding and education of each student.

Homework

Homework is a necessary part of each pupil's educational program. Each student must be expected to spend some time in addition to scheduled class instruction to achieve satisfactory work. Daily homework should not be viewed as punishment, but rather as a way to encourage and extend learning.

Online Courses

Whitehall Middle School offers two online learning platform options. Students who want to be fully virtual are encouraged to attend the Muskegon County Virtual Academy (MCVA) or Duck Creek Collaborative. Students attending MCVA are still eligible for WMS athletics.

Extra Help

Students are encouraged to seek extra help from their teachers if they do not understand any assignments or class discussions. They should arrange a conference with their teacher before or after school, or at a time convenient to both of them during the day.

SECTION 504 COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

*Under Section 504 in accordance with the Section 504 regulation at 34 C.F.R. / 104.7 (b) a complaint of disability discrimination under Section 504 is separate and independent from a Section 504 due process hearing. An individual is not required to pursue an informal resolution process prior to filing a formal complaint of disability discrimination with the District.

Whitehall District Schools has adopted the following Grievance Procedure for addressing complaints of discrimination under Section 504. A person is not required to use this procedure and may instead file a complaint directly with the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, 1350 Euclid Avenue,

STE 325, Cleveland, OH 44115:

Step 1:

A person who believes that he/she has been discriminated against by the Whitehall District schools is encouraged, but not required, to discuss the matter informally with the appropriate building principal, in the case of a student, or his/her immediate supervisor, in the case of an employee.

- If the building principal or the immediate supervisor is the subject of the complaint, or the grievant is not a student or employee, the grievant may, instead, contact Whitehall District Schools Section 504 Coordinator.
- The person receiving the complaint shall verbally convey his/her findings to both the person who alleged the violation and the person who is the subject of the complaint within 10 business days.

Step 2:

If the informal Step 1 process does not resolve the matter, or if the grievant does not wish to use the informal process set forth in Step 1, a written complaint may be submitted to Whitehall District Schools Section 504 Coordinator who will investigate the complaint.

- If the Section 504 Coordinator is the subject of the complaint, the complaint should be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools who will appoint another administrator to conduct the investigation.
- The complaint shall be signed by the grievant and include: grievant's name and contact information; facts of the incident or action complained about; date of the incident or action giving rise to the complaint; the type of discrimination alleged to have occurred and specific relief sought. Note: Witnesses names and other evidence as deemed appropriate by the grievant may also be submitted.
- An investigation of the complaint will be conducted within 10 business days following the written complaint. The investigation shall include an interview of the parties and witnesses, a review of relevant evidence, and any other steps necessary to ensure prompt and thorough investigation of the complaint.
- A written disposition of the complaint shall be issued within 10 business days of the completion of the investigation, unless a specific written extension of time is provided to the parties. Copies of the disposition will be given to both the grievant and the person who is the subject.

Step 3:

If the grievant wishes to appeal the decision in Step 2 above, the grievant may submit a signed, written appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within 10 business days after receipt of the written disposition. The Superintendent and his/her designee shall respond to the complaint, in writing, within 10 business days of the date of the appeal. Copies of the response shall be provided to the grievant and the person who is the subject of the complaint.

Whitehall District Schools provides assurance that it strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against persons who utilize this Grievance Procedure. Further, a grievant making a complaint is neither required to prosecute the matter nor confront the alleged discriminator or harasser when that would be inappropriate.

If you have questions regarding these procedures or want to file a complaint, please contact Whitehall District Schools District 504 Coordinator:

Kara Vanderweele
Whitehall District Schools
541 East Slocum
Whitehall, MI 49461

Notice of Section 504 Procedural Safeguards

The following is a brief summary description of the rights provided by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of

1973 to students with disabilities, or suspected disabilities. The intent of the law is to keep you fully informed

about decisions concerning your child and to inform you of your rights in the event you disagree with any decisions concerning your child. Under Section 504, you have the right to:

1. Have the district advise you of your rights under federal law.
2. Receive notice with respect to Section 504 identification, evaluation, and/or placement of your child.
3. Have an evaluation and placement decision for your child based upon information from a variety of sources and which is made by a team of persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of evaluation data and placement options.
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education, which includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the extent appropriate, if the child is Section 504 eligible.
5. Have your child take part in and receive benefits from the District without discrimination on the basis of disability.
6. Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided to non-disabled students.
7. Examine all relevant records of your child, including those relating to decisions about your child's Section 504 identification, evaluation, educational program, and placement; and obtain copies of those records at a reasonable cost, unless the fee would effectively prevent you access to the records.
8. Receive information in your native language and primary mode of communication.
9. Have a periodic re-evaluation of your child, including an evaluation before any significant change of placement.
10. Have your child given an equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities offered by the district.
11. Request and participate in an impartial due process hearing to resolve disagreements regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child, including a right to be represented by counsel in that process and to appeal an adverse decision.
12. File a complaint in accordance with the district's grievance procedures or with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, if you believe your child has been discriminated against.

Due Process Hearing and Complaint of Disability Discrimination

Section 504 due process hearing request is separate and independent from a complaint of disability discrimination under Section 504 in accordance with the Section 504 regulation 34 C.F.R ; 104.7 (b).

Due Process Hearing

Disagreements regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of a student are resolved through a Section 504 due process hearing. Parents/guardians have the right to be represented by counsel in this process and to appeal an adverse decision. Requests for a Section 504 Due Process Hearing must be made in

writing to the District's 504 Coordinator, Dr. Jerry McDowell, Superintendent, 541 East Slocum Street, Whitehall, Michigan, 49461. The request for Section 504 Due Process Hearing must include: (FORMP)

- The Grievant's contact information; name, address, phone, email (if available).
- A description of the alleged Section 504 violation.
- A description of proposed resolution/remedy.
- Signature and date.

Complaint of Disability Discrimination

Disability discrimination grievances are resolved by following the District's Grievance Procedures or by filing a

complaint with the US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

- There are two steps within the District's Grievance Procedure to address complaint of discrimination under Section 504. Steps are summarized below:

1. Discuss the matter informally with the appropriate person.
2. Submit a written complaint to your child's building principal or assistant principal.
3. Submit a written complaint to the District's Section 504 Coordinator, Dr. Jerry McDowell, Superintendent, 541 East Slocum Street, Whitehall, Michigan, 49461.

- A person is not required to use the District Grievance Procedure and may instead file a complaint directly with the Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education, 1350 Euclid Avenue, Suite 325, Cleveland, Ohio, 44115-1812

Attendance

Whitehall District Schools believes that a student's presence in the classroom is a critical part of the learning process. Our district goal is to have every student attend 170 of the 180 days.

Types of Absences

1. Verified Absences
 - a. Absences because of illness, doctor/dentist appointment, death in the family, or an emergency reported to the office by the parent. It is the student's responsibility to report to the teacher and to receive assignments missed during a verified absence.
 - b. Pre-Excused (vacation requests) - To determine whether the absences are to be excused, application should be made prior to intended absence. Students should check with teachers about missing work prior to absences.

- c. School Business – Students on field trips or out of the building with a teacher for a project, etc., will not be marked absent.
2. Unexcused Absences
 - a. Examples of unexcused absences are: skipping, haircut appointments, baby-sitting, shopping, or activities of a similar nature.
***The school reserves the ultimate right to determine what is excusable.**

Excessive Absences

An excessive degree of absences, excused or otherwise, will be subject to review and limitation by the principal and teachers. Excessive absences may require a doctor's statement to be excused. Special handling for long-term illness will be granted only at the discretion of the principal. **Excessive absences, without medical release, can also lead to prosecution for truancy.**

Tardies

Students are expected to be on time to all classes. When a student arrives at school after classes have begun, he/she must go to the office and sign-in. The student will be given an unexcused tardy unless a parent/guardian signs him/her in, sends a note, or calls. Tardies will accumulate for each marking semester. Tardies will be given for up to 10 minutes into the hour. After 10 minutes it becomes an absence.

Tardies will be handled in the following manner:

- 1st-2nd tardy - warnings from teacher
- 3rd tardy - teacher phone call to notify parent/guardian
- 4th tardy - lunch detention, office communication to parent/guardian
- 5th tardy - lunch detention, office communication to parent/guardian
- 6th+ tardy - lunch detention, parent meeting with administrator

Leaving School for Illness, Appointments, etc.

In the event of illness or doctor's appointment, students must sign out in the office. NO student may sign-out without written permission from a parent or guardian or a telephone call from a parent or guardian. Students will not be released to anyone other than those specified by the parent/guardian.

In NO case may a student leave the school without permission of the office - NO EXCEPTION! Whitehall Middle School is a CLOSED CAMPUS.

Transferring out of the District

Parents must notify the Middle School office about plans to transfer their child to another school. Transfers will be authorized only after the student has completed a Check Out form through the office, returned all books and materials and paid any fees or fines that are due.

Student Behavior and Discipline

Student Behavior

All Whitehall Middle School students are expected to behave appropriately during the school day and during all school sponsored activities, including activity nights, sporting events, field trips, etc. You are representing Whitehall Middle School, and should reveal to others your pride in your school.

Inappropriate behavior creating a disruption to the educational process will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action by means of restorative practices, detention, suspension or expulsion.

[Click to view the Whitehall Middle School's Behavior Definitions and Management Chart](#)

Discipline

Minor discipline problems are handled in the classroom. More serious discipline problems, which disrupt the educational process, and/or endanger others, will be referred to the principal or assistant principal. Disciplinary action will be within the following guidelines.

Restorative Practices

Empowers students to resolve conflicts on their own and in small groups with the guidance of administration. Essentially, the idea is to bring students together in peer-mediated groups to talk, ask questions, and air their grievances.

Detention

Detention is a disciplinary tool intended to encourage positive behavior changes. Teachers may assign and supervise detentions in their own classrooms, while the administration may also issue and manage detentions through the main office and media center.

Suspensions

- Removal from school shall be for a period not to exceed ten (10) days. The principal or his/her designee may take this action. Cause of this action is failure of the student to abide by the policies and regulations of the school. Students will be suspended whenever other disciplinary actions have proven futile.
- Suspensions may be given for the following even though they may be first time violations: Use of a controlled substance (drugs, alcohol, tobacco products), fighting, obscenities, insubordination, and others as deemed necessary. Parents shall be notified of this action prior to its implementation whenever possible.
- The students have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. If not satisfied at that level, the suspension may be appealed to the Board of Education. In the case of an appeal, the student will remain in school until the appeal is heard.

Expulsion

Removal from school shall be on a permanent basis. This action may be taken by the Board of Education only after an opportunity for a hearing is given. The hearing date will be set by the Superintendent of Schools. She/He will notify the parties involved as to their right of counsel and to the procedure to be used during the hearing.

**** Due Process:** When a teacher or administrator takes disciplinary action against a student, students have the following rights:

- To be informed of the reason for the action.
- To present any facts that will support their defense.
- To have a hearing to discuss both sides of the issue and/or the appropriateness of the action.

Cheating

In the school setting, cheating is defined as taking answers or ideas that are not the student's own. Cheating takes place any time a teacher specifically states that students may not work together or share their answers. In all instances, the person who helps another student to cheat is as guilty as the cheater, and the same penalties shall be imposed on the individual who knowingly helps another student cheat.

Major Areas of Concern	Definition	Cheating Penalties
Plagiarism	Taking material verbatim from outside sources without giving proper documentation	"0" on the assignment. Student's parents are notified. A conference may be held with the parents regarding the situation.
Homework	Having other people do a student's homework, or doing homework by copying another student's assignment.	No credit on the assignment. Parent will be notified by the teacher
Test and Test Taking	Cheating by looking at another student's paper, stealing of tests or passing of answers to student who will be taking the test at a later time, using crib sheets to help answer questions on test	"0" on the test. Student's parents will be notified. A conference may be held with the parents regarding the situation.

Cooperation with School Personnel

Students must obey the lawful instructions of school district personnel.

Disruptive Conduct

Conduct not supportive of the educational process will be considered disruptive and may result in referral to police/law enforcement.

Fighting/Assault -

Physical violence, or threats of physical violence, to other persons is prohibited on all school grounds and at all events. The administrator has discretion to determine the level of the incident and determine the level of consequence, including restorative practice, alternative work space, suspension and up to recommendation for expulsion.

Dress and Grooming

Students' dress and grooming must not disrupt the educational process, interfere with the maintenance of a positive teaching/learning climate, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety, and decency. No hoods will be allowed during school hours. Ultimately, school administrators will determine school appropriateness.

Banned / Illegal Substances on Campus or School Events

Tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, controlled or look-alike substances and *vapor devices.

- Police will be contacted when a law or local ordinance is violated.

- Use, in possession, or under the influence of alcohol or controlled and look-alike substances on school property during school hours, or at any extracurricular activities whether on school property or away shall be disciplined. Upon discretion of the administrator discipline will consist of either restorative practice, in-school suspension, up to a ten-day suspension, and/or a recommendation to the superintendent for a long-term suspension or expulsion.
- Selling or distributing controlled or look-alike substances are very serious offenses that will result in serious consequences. Discipline may include long-term suspension and/or expulsion from school.
- Possession/use of vapor devices, and their associated paraphernalia, will result in confiscation of products and/or other discipline measures such as: out of school suspension, in-school suspension, restorative practices and/or detentions. **It is now (2016) illegal in Muskegon County to use or possess vapor products of any type by persons under the age of 21.* Upon discretion of the administrator, discipline will consist of either an alternative work space, restorative practice, and out of school suspension.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Cell phone/unauthorized electronic devices (such as IPOD, MP3 player, handheld game, and smart watches) is prohibited at WMS during the school day. Personal headphones or earbuds may be used or worn during lunchtime or in the classroom, provided the classroom teacher's permission has been obtained. Bringing a personal device is at the discretion of the student and parent, investigations into missing devices will be at the discretion of the administration. Every classroom at WMS is equipped with a telephone. All communication during the school day goes through the main office. If a message is required, we will deliver it to the student from the main office. Students who violate the cell phone/unauthorized electronic device policy will be subject to the following consequences:

First Offense:

1. The item will be confiscated and turned over to the office.
2. The device will be returned to the student at the end of the day.

Second Offense

1. The device will be confiscated and turned over to the office
2. Parent/Guardian will be contacted
3. The device will be returned at the discretion of the parent/guardian.

Subsequent Offenses:

1. The device will be confiscated and turned over to the office and only returned to the parent/guardian.
2. Further disciplinary (in-school/out of school suspensions) action will be taken by administration.

Notice: Schools will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices or cell phones.

Refusal to Identify Self

All students must, upon request, identify themselves to proper school authorities in the school building, on school grounds, or at school sponsored events.

GENERAL CONDUCT POLICIES AND RULES

Emergency Procedures

1. **General Regulations**
 - a. Refuge areas are designated on the building layout sheet entitled REFUGE AREAS. Definite assignments have been made for these areas of the building. The main office will be notified by the Muskegon County Weather Bureau Civil Defense Office whenever tornado watches, tornado warnings, or civil defense conditions exist. The most important thing is to keep cool and collected.
2. **Fire/Lockdown/Tornado Drills**
 - a. Fire/Lockdown/Tornado drills are conducted on a regular basis to insure the safety of high school students should an emergency of this type arise. Fire evacuation routes and tornado refuge areas are posted in each classroom.
3. **Tornado Watch**
 - a. Severe weather with tornado conditions present. There will be notification to teachers and students at this time. Children will not be sent home. Classrooms may report to their assigned refuge area, if necessary.
4. **Tornado Warning & Civil Defense Warning**
 - a. Notification will be by P.A. system with instructions. This condition means there is immediate danger. Children will be assembled in the designated refuge area of the building as per building layout sheets posted in each room. If this type of warning comes at our regular dismissal time, we will keep the children at school and send them to the designated refuge area until the all clear is given.

Food, Beverages, Containers & Wrappers

Should be disposed of in the appropriate containers. Food or beverages are allowed in the classrooms at the discretion of the teacher.

Freedom of Speech and Assembly

Students are entitled to verbally express their personal opinions without the use of obscenities or personal attacks. Such verbal opinions shall not interfere with the freedom of others to express themselves, and may not interfere with the educational process.

All student meetings in school buildings or on school grounds must be authorized by the principal. Students have the freedom to assemble peacefully.

Freedom to Publish

Students are entitled to express in writing their personal opinions when the distribution of such material does not interfere with or disrupt the educational process. Post edited approval by administration is required before distribution. Students who edit, publish, or distribute handwritten, printed, or duplicated matter among their fellow students within the schools must assume full responsibility for the content of such publications. Libel, obscenity, and personal attacks violate the intent of this code.

Commercial solicitation will be permitted only upon approval of the school superintendent.

The use of political material in the schools and on school grounds must be approved by the principal.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of Whitehall District Schools. Students are responsible to see that his/her locker is kept clean, locked, and in order. Combinations are assigned and recorded in the office. Students may not display materials that are suggestive or advertise or promote the use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco in or on their lockers. Please keep the locker closed and locked to help keep it secure. Locker inspection and searches will be performed at the discretion of the building administration. THE SCHOOL CANNOT ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITEMS LOST OR STOLEN. To encourage organization and planning students are encouraged to visit their lockers before school, during class transitions, and after school. No contact paper or contact stickers will be permitted inside or outside the lockers. Open beverage containers are not permitted in the lockers. Coats and personal backpacks/bags are to be kept in lockers and not worn or brought to class. In accepting a locker assignment and in using the locker, students understand they are fully responsible for its contents. The principal or designee has the authority to open and examine all lockers at any time.

Lunchroom Regulations

Whitehall Middle School staff expects that all its students will conduct themselves properly during lunch periods, practice good table manners and abide by the following rules:

- A. Students must eat in designated areas.
- B. Students may not leave the campus during the lunch hour.
- C. Students are to leave their area clean and suitable for luncheon use by other students.
- D. Students must properly dispose of all waste materials.
- E. Students are not to throw any object, no matter how small or how short the distance.
- F. NO BACKPACKS/PURSES WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE CAFETERIA.

Violations of the above rules may result in cafeteria clean-up duty, detention, suspension, loss of cafeteria privileges, or any combination thereof.

Food Delivery

Students are prohibited from ordering food delivered during the school day, either directly from a restaurant or through smartphone applications and websites. Any food deliveries will be confiscated by the front office and, at the discretion of the front office, may either be retrieved at the end of the school day or discarded. Violation of this policy may result in student discipline.

Medication

Students should not have medication in school that has not been cleared by the office. IT IS AGAINST STATE LAW FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO GIVE MEDICINE SUCH AS ASPIRIN, COLD PILLS, ETC., TO STUDENTS WITHOUT WRITTEN PARENTAL PERMISSION. All necessary medication must be brought to the office and be dispensed from the office. Parental permission must accompany non-prescription medication. Parental and doctor permission must accompany prescription medication.

Non-Discrimination

Whitehall District Schools recognizes and protects the individual and legal rights of students as people and as citizens, regardless of race, religion, sex, economic status, national origin, age, or handicap. Further, the district will not condone behaviors and activities that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, economic status, national origin, age, or handicap.

Off-Campus Events

Students at school sponsored, off-campus events shall be governed by school district rules and regulations, and are subject to the authority of school district officials.

School Social Functions

Whitehall Middle School dances are limited to only Whitehall Middle School students. School dances are for Whitehall seventh and eighth grades only. Dances are chaperoned by parents and staff members. The times of the dances are from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Each dance must have at least two sets of parents and two faculty members as chaperones. Students will not be able to leave the dance before 8:30 p.m. unless a parent picks them up. All students must be picked up within 15 minutes of the conclusion of any activity.

Search and Seizure

The search of school property assigned to a specific student (locker, desk, etc.) and the seizure of items in his possession is allowed when any of the following may apply:

- The school authority has a reasonable suspicion to believe the possession of the property constitutes a crime or rule violation.
- It is in the presence of the student or when disaster may be imminent.
- Possession of illegal items may be reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of others.
- Items used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process are suspected student possessions.

Any section of this document, or portion thereof, found by adjudication to be contrary to law or constitutional rights shall be stricken without effect to the remainder.

Handheld Metal Detector Search Procedures

Creating and maintaining a safe learning environment is important to Whitehall Schools. In order to maintain a safe environment, designated school employees may conduct a search when they reach a threshold of "reasonable suspicion" that a search will result in evidence that the student has violated a rule contained in the handbook, has violated a law, or possesses an item or substance which presents a danger.

The scope of the search should be limited to the reasonable suspicion that motivated the search. If an item is found that leads to reasonable suspicion that additional, correlated items may also exist, the search may be extended.

Any search of a student will follow the guidelines set forth by board policy as well as legal standards for conducting a search:

- The student will be given the opportunity to turn in any contraband prior to conducting the search.
- District employees shall not conduct a strip search or arrange any clothing of an individual to permit visual inspection of underclothing, breasts, buttocks, or genitalia.
- A parent should be notified of the search as soon as reasonably possible.

A handheld metal detector is an additional tool that will be used in guidance with established search and seizure practices. In the event that a handheld metal detector screening is conducted:

- Scanning shall be conducted by a person of the same gender..
- The metal detector should not make contact with the student.
- The search shall be conducted in a private room.

- At least two people should be present for the search.
- Prior to being scanned, the student will be asked to remove any metal objects and set the objects aside.
- If the detector alerts during scanning, the student will be asked to remove anything metal and the screening will be repeated.
- If the detector activates again and the article can't be removed, the staff member shall visibly confirm the students' explanation. If the reason for the activation of the detector can't be explained, the student will be provided another opportunity to hand over the item or the parents of the student will be contacted.

School staff will generally not involve law enforcement officers in screenings; however, the school resource officer (SRO) may assist or be present when school employees conduct screenings.

Sexual Assault / Harassment of Students

Any un-welcomed and/or unwanted advance, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or other verbal or physical conduct, or communication of a sexual nature from anyone with whom the student may interact in the course of receiving an education in school sponsored activities. Such harassment can be:

1. Verbal Harassment – Derogatory comments, jokes, slurs or remarks/questions of a sexual nature.
2. Physical Harassment – Unnecessary or offensive touching.
3. Visual Harassment – Derogatory or offensive posters, cards, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, looks, and gestures.

If you believe that you have been the victim of sexual harassment by another student or if you have any questions about the issue, seek the help of an adult whom you trust, such as a teacher, counselor, your parent or guardian, or one of the building administrators. Any report of sexual harassment will be investigated and a written record filed.

If it is determined that a student has sexually harassed another student, the possible consequences to the offending student include:

1. Parent conference
2. Detention
3. Suspension from school
4. Apology to the victim
5. Referral to the police

Reprisals, threats, or intimidation of the victim will be treated as serious offenses, which could result in further suspension from school.

In all cases, a high degree of confidentiality will be maintained by the school authorities to protect both the student and the alleged offender.

Snow Days

In the case of hazardous winter weather conditions, a decision will be made by the central office administration whether school will be held that day. Radio and television stations will be notified immediately to broadcast school closing. Parents who are listed in the students powerschool contact information will be notified though the district robocall system.

Transportation – School Bus

The school district provides free transportation for all students living in the district except those living within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile for the school. We expect the bus rider's cooperation in making school transportation as safe as possible by following the rules.. A REMINDER THAT WHEN A STUDENT LOSES HIS/HER RIDING PRIVILEGES, HE/SHE IS STILL REQUIRED BY LAW TO ATTEND SCHOOL.

1. The driver has the same authority on the bus as the teacher has in the classroom.
Cooperation is expected at all times with the driver.
2. Students are to observe classroom conduct (except for ordinary conversation) while getting on or off, and while riding the bus.
3. Students are to occupy the seat assigned by the driver and to refrain at all times from moving around while the bus is in motion.
4. It is the student's responsibility to be at the designated pick-up location five minutes prior to the scheduled time and at the bus loop on-time in the afternoon. The driver is responsible for maintenance of this schedule and can not wait for tardy students.
5. All students shall enter and leave the bus only at the front door, after the bus has come to a stop, except in case of emergency.
6. Students are not allowed to ride any other bus without written consent from the high school office.
7. No creatures of any kind (dead or alive) shall be brought on board a bus.
8. No firearms or other weapons (cased or uncased) or ammunition may be brought on board a bus.
9. Arrangements for visitors to ride a school bus must be made 24 hours in advance, through the principal's office.
10. Windows are to be used for ventilation and visibility only. Arms and head must never be extended, even partially, out a window. There is to be no shouting through windows or throwing items out of the windows.
11. Smoking or using any device that creates a spark or flame is prohibited.
12. Take care of the bus, as they each cost our community \$80,000 to purchase. Pick up after yourself; use the trash can at the front of the bus.
13. Cross the road ONLY in front of the bus and ONLY on signal from the driver.
14. Wait for the bus only on the side of the road on which it stops. Fatalities show the crucial need for strict attention to the regulation.
15. Eating and drinking on the bus is not allowed, with the exception of a bottle of water.

Students will be allowed to have one designated pick-up address and one designated drop-off address. This address can be home or day-care and can be changed with one-week written notice to the transportation office. Please contact the Transportation office if there is a need for multiple bus stops for your child. We will decide these requests on a case-by-case basis. Please remember, if your child needs to go home with a friend to do homework, you will need to make arrangements to transport him/her. Students will not be allowed to ride to any location other than the one-stop designated by his/her parents.

Discipline Procedures for Riding the Bus

Responsibility for behavior on the bus is vested in the driver. Accordingly, and because it is clear that responsibility cannot be effective without proper investment of authority, the following clarifications for bus driver authority are made:

1. When a bus driver is having a problem with a rider, the driver must use the following procedure:
First Offense
 - A. Verbally resolves problem with student
 - B. May or may not call parent
 - C. Need not inform principal

- D. Student takes conduct report with first notice checked on form, (white copy goes home, is signed and returned)

Second Offense

- A. Hands out conduct report and attaches a copy of the rules for riding the bus
- B. Bus driver will call parent
- C. Gives copy to principal/supervisor

Third Offense

- A. Driver must inform supervisor then contact the principal
- B. Driver with supervisor/principal suspends riding privileges
- C. Transportation office must post: student name, duration of suspension, and the bus number.

- 2. If a suspended student returns to the bus and again misbehaves that student must be suspended again immediately. The proper notification procedures must then be started. (Step 3)
- 3. If a driver is having many problems with students or if the run is usually a “problem” run, then seats are to be assigned.
- 4. When children are misbehaving on the bus OR when there are threats of, or actual fighting on the bus, the driver should attempt to control the situation. Maintaining behavior is more important than the schedule.
- 5. Fighting will result in automatic bus suspension for three days.
- 6. With the exception of fighting, suspension from riding the bus will be 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10 days in progression of infractions (subject to severity).

Bus Monitoring Cameras

Monitor cameras on W.D.S. buses will only be used to assist the safety and behavioral management needs of the pupil transportation program.

Cameras will be positioned on school buses randomly or as assigned by the Transportation Supervisor. All data recorded on school buses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality by all transportation staff. All data recorded are the property of Whitehall District Schools.

Recordings will only be viewed by authorized transportation staff, administration and/or students and parents who are authorized by the Transportation Supervisor. Recordings are not for public review.

Security of all recordings will be the responsibility of the Transportation Supervisor.

Visitors

Parents are encouraged to visit our building during the school day. When you visit, please check in at the office before proceeding to any classroom.

For our students’ safety, adult visitors to the building are required to receive authorization from the office to visit any classes and/or be in the building. **No student or pre-school visitors are allowed during the school day.**

Sex Equality (Title IX)DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE

On July 21, 1975, President Ford signed Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. The opening statement reads: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...”

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR COMPLIANCE OF TITLE IX

- A. No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic, extra-curricular, research, occupational training or any other education program or activity operated by a recipient..."
- B. All educational agencies or activities receiving federal funds must comply with the employment provisions of Title IX regulations which include, but are not limited to, recruitment, pre-employment inquiries, employment procedures, assignments, salaries, fringe benefits, and any other term, condition or privilege of employment.
- C. Equal opportunity for members of both sexes must be provided in interscholastic, intercollegiate, club or intramural athletics operated or sponsored by a recipient.
- D. No person shall, on the basis of sex, be denied admission or be subject to discrimination in admission by a recipient subject to the admissions provisions of Title IX.

Whitehall District School Title IX designate is:

Beth Whaley
Whitehall District Schools
541 E Slocum Street
Whitehall, MI 49461

All alleged violations should be brought to the immediate attention of the Title IX designate.

TITLE VI, TITLE IX, AND SECTION 504 DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE

[Title IX](#)

[Discrimination and Harassment - Students](#)

WDS Procedural Guidelines for Identification of Supplementary Aids & Support Services for Students with Disabilities

The following procedures have been established as "Accommodations for Students with Disabilities" for Vocational Education Programs.

- A. The building principal and/or special education staff are notified. All planning is done under the supervision of the building principal with the cooperative efforts of the counseling department, special education department, vocational education department and appropriate agencies.
- B. All students with identified disabilities will be evaluated during the 9th grade year by the North Service Unit vocational planning consultant in the areas of interest and aptitude.
- C. High school special education teachers will utilize the information in developing individual education plans for these students, including appropriate pre-vocational and vocational courses.

Current courses offered are pre-vocational math and reading in the resource room setting. In addition, the following vocational courses are offered as part of the Whitehall High School curriculum:

- 1. Parenting
- 2. Health

3. Peer Assistance
4. Food for Fitness
5. Nutritional Science

Further assistance is available through resource support, consultation between special education and vocational education instructors, materials adaptation, and curriculum accommodation.

During students junior and senior years a representative of the Michigan Rehabilitation Services comes to Whitehall High School to discuss services available through that agency. member acts as a direct liaison between the Board and the student body. He/she enjoys many advantages by being on the Board. This reflects the Board's interest in communicating with the young people of our school.

Whitehall District Schools Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Whitehall District Schools (WDS) provides a full range of electronic information services, including Internet access, to students and staff. Use of technology at WDS is a privilege that is intended to enhance learning, develop the ability to use technology as a tool for improved productivity and communication, develop essential electronic information research skills, and exchange information.

With access to technology comes responsibility – both for the equipment and for the information accessed and created. Users need to familiarize themselves with these responsibilities. Failure to follow them may result in loss of technology privileges and/or disciplinary action as outlined in the Technology Acceptable Use Policy and respective Board of Education policies.

Unless otherwise specified, the following regulations shall apply equally to all users of technology at WDS.

The District shall not be held responsible for any individual's inappropriate use of its technology in violation of the law. Each user shall be held personally, civilly and criminally responsible for any violations of the law. The District has the right to revoke the user's access privileges at any time for any reason

Each user of technology shall read the Technology Acceptable Use Policy and sign the WDS Acceptable Use Policy Form. Use of District technology shall constitute agreement and consent to abide by the terms set forth in the Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

Internet, Network and Computer Usage Guidelines and Expectations

1. Personal Safety

- a. You will not post personal contact information about yourself or other people. Personal contact information includes your address, telephone, school address, work address, social security number, etc.
- b. You will promptly disclose to your instructor or other school employee any message you receive that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.

2. Prohibited Activities

- a. You will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any computer system or go beyond your authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files. Users shall have no expectation of privacy when using District technology.

- b. You will not download or install any unapproved, software or unlicensed or otherwise copyrighted software.
- c. You will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
- d. You will not engage in electronic cheating of any form.
- e. You will not vandalize school property.
- f. You are prohibited from using district technology for unauthorized private enterprise, product advertisement or political lobbying.
- g. You are responsible for seeing that no hardware is disconnected, removed or relocated.
- h. You are responsible for printing only what is needed and using what is printed.
- i. Under no conditions should you provide your password to another person.
- j. Students must use technology within the parameters provided by the instructor.

3. Inappropriate Language and Material

- a. You will not use or purposefully view obscene, vulgar, threatening, or disrespectful language or material.
- b. You will not engage in personal attacks or harassment (cyberbullying), including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- c. You will not post false information about a person or organization.

4. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- a. You will not plagiarize. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours.
- b. You will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright.
- c. If you mistakenly access inappropriate information, you should immediately tell your teacher or another District employee. This will protect you against a claim that you have intentionally violated this Policy.

5. Free Speech

- a. Your right to free speech, as set forth in the disciplinary code, applies also to your communication on the Internet. The Network/Internet is considered a limited forum, similar to the school newspaper, and therefore, the District may restrict your speech for valid educational reasons.

6. Searches and Seizure

- a. The situation is similar to the rights you have in the privacy of your locker and/or classroom.
- b. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the Network/Internet may lead to discovery that you have violated this Policy, the disciplinary code, or the law.
- c. All data is the property of the District, and the District has the right to supervise the use of such property.
- d. Students' parents/legal guardians have the right at any time to request to see the contents of your electronic files.

7. Due Process

- a. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the Network/Internet.
- b. In the event there is a claim that you have violated this Policy or disciplinary code in your use of the Network/Internet, the claim will be handled in a manner described in the disciplinary guidelines.

8. Limitation of Liability

- a. The District will observe all requirements of Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and Children's Online Protection Act (COPA). The District has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials via procedures and web filtering. On a local or global network; however, it is impossible to control all materials and a user may discover controversial material and visually explicit materials. The District has taken available precautions to restrict and/or control student access to material on the Internet that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to a minor. However, it is impossible for the District to restrict access to all objectionable and/or controversial materials that may be found on the Internet.
- b. WDS makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied for the service it is providing. The District will not be held responsible for any disclosure of information that occurs as a result, directly or indirectly, of the failure to safeguard the password or account identified information. Use of the District technology systems is at the user's own risk. These systems are provided on an "as is/as available" basis. The District will not be responsible for any damage the user may suffer, including but not limited to loss, damage, or unavailability of data stored on the District system. The District will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the District systems or the Internet.

9. Student Disciplinary Guidelines

- a. Students will be disciplined for violating the responsibilities outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy. He/she can reasonably expect the following action to be taken:
 - i. **First Offense**: The student will lose all technology privileges for 10 school days. The offense will be recorded in the student's file.
 - ii. **Second Offense**: The student will lose all technology privileges for 90 school days. The offense will be recorded in the student's file.
 - iii. **Third Offense**: The student will lose all technology privileges for 180 school days. The offense will be recorded in the student's file.
 - iv. Users will be required to make full financial restitution of any expenses incurred or any damages caused.
- b. **The school administration reserves the right to administer disciplinary action in a discretionary manner and may vary from those outlined above.**

AI Policy

Acceptable use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The following guidelines, in alignment with the district AUA/AUP, outline the acceptable use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and technologies by students. Violations of these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action.

- Academic Integrity - AI is NOT a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. Students are expected to give credit to the source or acknowledge the AI tool they used to generate content, similar to how they would cite a source in a traditional research paper or project.
- Class Use - The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers or complete schoolwork must align with your teacher's syllabus for using AI. If you have any questions about appropriate use, talk with your teacher.
- Bullying and Harassment - Do not use AI to engage in any form of bullying, harassment,

- discrimination, or other behavior that may be harmful to others. Examples include but are not limited to modification of images, video, audio, or text.
- Bias and Inaccuracy - AI results may generate inaccurate or biased results. It is your responsibility to check your results for relevance and accuracy.
 - Privacy - Protect the privacy and security of personal information.

Chromebook Repair Policy

Many classes use technology as part of the instruction. The district provides chromebooks to students. Students are expected to keep chromebooks in good working order.

Repair Guidelines

- Students get one free repair per year if their chromebook becomes damaged due to normal use or a manufacturer's defect when initially purchased by the district. Lost or damaged charging cords can be counted as a free repair.
- Other repairs will result in payment of all damaged parts at full cost to the district at current prices.
- Malicious, reckless, or careless damages will be charged to the student regardless of repair history.
- Chromebooks that are lost or damaged beyond the value of the chromebook will be charged to the student at a prorated price based on original cost and years of use.
- Loaner computers may be available during the time it takes to repair the chromebook. Loaners must be returned to the office or cart each day and may not be taken home or stored in a locker. Loaners may be denied to students who have outstanding repair bills or frequent repairs.

Examples of device/hardware failure: Mainboard failure, screen wiring failure (not cracked Lcd's), fan failure, keyboard/touchpad failure (non-malicious, no spills, no picked off keys and components), video cable failure (unexposed), screws falling out.

Examples of malicious damage: Keys and rubber pads pulled off of keyboards, broken Lcd screen, pulled out hinges, etching into the device, writing on the device with marker, broken hinge covers, broken bezel, broken top cover, broken bottom cover.

Athletic/Extracurricular Information

We believe that Whitehall District Schools' athletes and participants in extracurricular activities should compete honorably while representing their team, school, and community. With appropriate attitude, dedication, and leadership, they will contribute positively to school spirit and community pride. To accomplish this, we encourage the cooperation of athletes and parents. Please click on the following link to view the Whitehall District Schools Athletic Information.

[Whitehall District Schools Athletic Information](#)